

HEALTHY

BEES

HEALTHY

LIVES



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THE PROBLEM

Honeybees and other pollinators are in deep trouble. Colonies are dying at an unprecedented rate, a problem known as Colony Collapse Disorder. Last winter, beekeepers nationwide reported bee losses over 30 percent and as high as 70 percent.

Pesticides are one of the causes of Colony Collapse Disorder. Pesticide exposure can disrupt bees' reproduction, mobility, navigation, feeding, foraging, memory, learning, and overall hive activity. These same pesticides also harm wild pollinators like butterflies, bumblebees, and other beneficial insects.

This is a problem right here in our community. Last fall, three hives were killed by what appears to have been a legal pesticide application in southwest Minneapolis.

Bees are also suffering from a lack of flowers that bloom over the full growing seasons. Bees need a variety of flowers to satisfy all their nutritional requirements and to make honey. And these flowers need to be pesticide-free.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

We are dependent on honeybees for one out of every three bites of food we eat.

Pollinators and other beneficial insects are "indicator species," which means that they are more sensitive to pesticides and other environmental toxins. The health of pollinators reflects the health of our environment. If pollinators can't survive, that sends a troubling message about the future health of birds, animals, and people.

THE SOLUTION

It doesn't have to be this way. Other communities, both in Europe and the United States, have taken a stand for pollinators and against harmful pesticides. We can make our city an oasis for pollinators by taking four actions:

1

TAKE THE PLEDGE TO KEEP YOUR YARD PESTICIDE FREE!

Let your neighbors see that you've taken the pledge by putting up a Healthy Bees, Healthy Lives lawn sign. Sign up here: www.thebeezkneezdelivery.com/hbhl.

2

ADVOCATE FOR POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY POLICIES!

Currently, cities can't regulate anything having to do with pesticides, and the State of Minnesota shares no information about pesticide applications with near neighbors. Join us in pushing the Legislature to give local governments the authority to regulate non-agricultural uses of pesticides, and to make information about pesticide applications public. Contact your state and local elected officials. Bring a resolution to your precinct caucus – you can find a version here: www.thebeezkneezdelivery.com/hbhl.

3

PLANT A POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY YARD!

We can each choose to grow plants that are good forage for bees and other beneficial insects. Together, we can make our city a banquet for bees. But be careful – always ask your nursery, garden center or hardware store if they can guarantee that the plants or seeds you're buying were not "pre-poisoned" with a systemic pesticide. For ideas on what plants are the best for pollinators, go to www.beelab.umn.edu and www.thebeezkneezdelivery.com/hbhl.

4

HELP IMPROVE YOUR LOCAL HARDWARE STORE, GARDEN CENTER OR NURSERY!

Ask your local hardware store to stop carrying pesticides with known toxicity to pollinators. If your local nursery or garden store can't guarantee that the plants and seeds they sell are not treated with systemic pesticides, ask them to tell their suppliers that their customers are demanding 100% pesticide-free plants. For resources and more information, go to: <http://pollinatorrevival.org/>.